

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010*

**Remarks at the National Peace Officers Memorial Service**

*May 15, 2010*

Thank you, Chuck, for that warm introduction and for your outstanding leadership as national president of the Fraternal Order of Police. I also want to commend the entire Fraternal Order of Police and all its leaders, including Jim Pasco, for the work you do on behalf of America's peace officers. Let me also recognize FOP Auxiliary President Beverly Crump, members of the FOP Auxiliary, Members of Congress and my administration, including Attorney General Eric Holder, and distinguished guests who are here today.

To the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, our hearts go out to you for your loss. The husbands and wives, mothers and fathers you loved, they protected us all. And all Americans are grateful for the lives that they gave in the line of duty.

To the active duty law enforcement officers who traveled from all over the country to be here, let me simply say, thank you. Thank you for the service you are rendering to our Nation, and thank you for the sacrifices you are making on behalf of our people.

Every day in America, families go about their lives. They wake up, sit down for breakfast, send their kids off to school, then they head into the office or onto the factory floor. And after putting in a honest day's work, they return home, ready to do it all over again in the morning.

We often take it for granted, this cycle of life. We know, of course, that chance can change everything overnight. But we also rely on a certain order in our lives, a certain sense of security that lets us sleep safely in our beds and walk around our neighborhoods free from fear and go about our daily lives without being the victims of crime.

That sense of security doesn't come on its own. What makes it possible, what makes freedom possible, are the law enforcement officers that we honor today. It's men and women like so many of you. It's anyone who's ever put on a uniform or worn a badge in the name of law, in the name of order, in the name of protecting and defending the United States of America.

What led you to live such a life? What leads a person to put on that uniform, to wear that badge, to enter the law enforcement profession? Part of it, of course, is what leads any of us to pursue a profession, a responsibility to provide for our wives and our husbands, to give our children and grandchildren a better life. For some, there's also a family legacy to honor, a proud inheritance an officer may aspire to uphold.

But there's also another reason, a higher calling that led the men and women we honor today, like so many of you, to become peace officers, a calling to serve our neighbors, a calling to serve our neighborhoods, a calling to live a life in service of others.

It's a calling that carries immense risk. You don't know what dangers you'll confront each time you put on that uniform or step outside in plain clothes. Whether you're a beat patrolman or a road deputy, you don't know what the next dispatch will bring. All you know is your duty to keep us safe, to keep our communities safe, to keep America safe. It is a duty you fulfill every single day.

Today we honor Americans who lost their lives in pursuit of that duty, in pursuit of that calling. We honor Traffic Sergeant Mark Dunakin, a 17-year veteran of Oakland's Police

Department. "A big Teddy bear," his friends called him, who loved his Buckeyes and Steelers. The kind of guy you could always count on to get you to do the right thing. Mark was killed on March 21, 2009, during a traffic stop at 74th Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard. And he leaves behind his wife Angela and three children.

We honor Deputy Burt Lopez, a 6-year veteran of Okaloosa County Sheriff Office in Florida. Big-hearted, Burt once delayed serving a minor warrant until a Sunday so that the defendant, a father of six, could earn one more day's pay for his family. On April 25, 2009, Burt and Deputy Skip York were killed attempting to arrest a domestic assault suspect they had tracked down at a gun club in Crestville [Crestview].<sup>\*</sup> Burt is survived by his wife Michelle and five children.

We honor Trooper Joshua Miller, a veteran of both the Pennsylvania State Police and the United States Marine Corps. Josh, it's been said, was a trooper's trooper. The only thing he loved more than stopping drunk drivers and hunting was spending time with his wife Angela and their three daughters. His face lit up when you mentioned them. Josh was killed on June 7, 2009, during an operation that ultimately rescued a 9-year-old boy who'd been kidnapped by his father.

We honor these Americans and each of the law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty last year. Each loved, each is missed, each is among America's finest. These men and women join nearly 19,000 Americans who've made such a sacrifice since Deputy Isaac Smith was shot investigating a disturbance at a New York tavern in 1792. Such a sacrifice, such an honor roll, is what makes it possible for us to go on about our lives, to pursue our dreams, to enjoy America's freedoms.

It is an honor roll engraved in stone not far from here, at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Guarding over the park and the memories of Americans memorialized there are four bronze lions. Beneath one is a verse from the Book of Proverbs I impart to you as a prayer: "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are as bold as a lion."

May God's face shine upon the lions that we have lost, may He watch over the ones that guard us still, and may He bless now and forever the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:58 a.m. at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Chuck Canterbury, national president, and James O. Pasco, Jr., executive director, Fraternal Order of Police.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : National Peace Officers Memorial Service.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Canterbury, Chuck; Castro, Jake; Castro, Jami; Crump, Beverly; Dunakin, Angela; Dunakin, Anthony; Dunakin, Patrick; Dunakin, Sienna; Holder, Eric H., Jr.; Lopez, Erik; Lopez, Jesse; Lopez, Madilyn; Lopez, Michelle; Miller, Angela M.; Miller, Breana; Miller, Joslyn; Miller, Justine; Pasco, James O., Jr.

*Subjects:* District of Columbia : Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, National; Law enforcement and crime : Fraternal Order of Police; Law enforcement and crime : Law enforcement officers, memorial service.

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<sup>\*</sup> White House correction.

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